

**E**Here  
followeth  
the boke of Solomō  
called Ecclesiastes /  
(which is to say in  
Englishe/ a pre-  
cher).



¶ The sermons of Solomon þ  
sonne of Dauid/ kyng  
of Ierusalem.

**A**ll thinges at all tyme ar  
subiect vnto vanite (saith  
this preacher) ther is nothyng els  
but very vanytie. What els get-  
teth man of all thyng; vnder the  
sonne (laboure he neuer so sore)  
but vanite. One age goth and a  
nother cometh/ but the erth aby-  
deth styl. The sonne ryseth and  
goth downe/ returning vnto his  
place to rise agayne. Nowe blos-  
meth the wynde agaynst þ south  
and anone it returneth against þ  
north/ thus turning contynually  
about agayn vnto þ place where  
it began. All ryuers ronne in to  
the see/ & yet riseth it nat so hygh  
as to passe her bownes/ but she

W. it. sens.

Sendeth them backe agayne to retorne into her. All thynges for their unstable mutabilite are to harde & high for manes capacyte for as nothig can satisfye the eye/ so desyreth the eare euermore to here. What thing hath ther ben/ but a like succedeth & is to come/ ye/ what thing hath ther be done but a lyke is & shal be/ so þynder the sonne is ther nothing newe.

Is there any thinge of whiche it may be sayd. Lo/this is newe/ No verely. For it hath ben befoþ tyme: & as thynges paste growe out of mide with vs: so shal thynges present be forgoten with the that folow vs. I my selfbeyng a precher/ & kyng ouer Israel abi-  
dying in Ierusalem: endeuoured my selfe delygetly & wylsely to en-  
serche the knowlege of euery thi-

ge

ge vnder the sonne. But lordē/ how heuy & tediose is this stu-  
dy/ whiche god hath gyuen to moþ tall men thus to wery the selues in so serchyng. But yet I con-  
sidered al thinges made vnder he-  
uen: & lo/ I could espye nothige  
els/ but that all was but vanite &  
mystery. The crooked can nat be  
made right / nor the fautye that  
dayly slyppe away can nat be no-  
red. Thā thus thought I with  
my self: He / I am cleere & mygh-  
ty/excelllyng of all men in wyl-  
dom that were euer before me in  
Ierusalem: I haue promoted &  
increased the study of wylsdom  
& knowlege of all thynges: I ga-  
ue my selfe hole by longe exper-  
ience to get wylsdom/ and also to  
know the mad folysshnes of me.  
But this myn enforcement I felte

it to

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. ii.

It to be no nother thā a miserable labour & laborous turnētyng of my mynde: For where is moche wisedom/ there is as moch affliction & trouble/ & who so contenteth to haue exerycise & knowlege of many thinges / he wrapeth hym selfe in moche labour & heuynesse.

Cap. ii.

**W**herfore I thouȝt thus w<sup>t</sup> my self sayēg: Well I shal take me to more ease & pleasure/ to laugh & be mery. But lo/ all this was euyn also very vante. & I tolde laughter/ thou makeſt me madde I said vnto spore & mirth: what dost thou: art thou mad to: And here thā I decreed w<sup>t</sup> my selfe to w<sup>c</sup>draw my fleshe frō wyne) & to set my herte so wisely to optayne prudence/ that I myght also en-

structe

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. ii.

structe and lerne other what they shulde do/ & shew thē what is gode & profitable as lōge as they lyue. I attempted also to bringe about many/ both noble & gret thinges: I buyldeſ costly houses/ & plāted vynē yardeſ / I made me gardēſ as swete as paradyſe/ set with all maner frutful trees/ & cōuated my cundyt; with water to myniste moistenes vnto euery yōg tre. I had seruātes/ hādmaydens/ & a gret famely. I had gretter herd; of bestes & shepe thā all y wer befor me i Jerusale. I had gathered me golde & syluer/ with oþr<sup>2</sup> treasure as besimed any kig what so euer he were. Thā did I ordeyne me syngers & dauncets both men & wome/ whō to here & beholde was gret plesure/ of whō some were my cup betters: so that there

Ecclesiastes. Cap. ii.  
there was never none lyke me in  
Jerusalem: natwithstād yng yet  
dyd wylsdome abyde stylle with  
me: And what so euer my eyes de  
syred/ they had it: Neither dyd  
I nat withdrawe my hert to any  
pleasure/ but dyd recreate my selfe  
in euery labour. And this plea  
saunt frute me thought my selfe  
well worthy for my trauell. But  
after this at laste began I to cō  
syder & expende all my dedes: &  
so/ al were very vanite & misery/  
& nothyng stable vnder the sōne.  
Thā I turned me to beholde my  
wisedome/ & I sawe it but mad  
nes & folishenes/ for what mā is  
there/ which can cōtrefayt & fo  
lowe that kyngē which hath ma  
de hi: And here I spyyed as greet  
differēce betwixt very wylsdome  
and folishenes/as betwixt light  
and

Ecclesiastes. Cap. ii.  
and darkenes/ & that for bycause  
the wisenēs eye stādeth in his  
heed/ & the sole gropeth in derke  
nes. And ouer this yet I percey  
ued that in the meane season one  
gothe his waye lyke the tother.  
And than I thought: Sith it ha  
pen to me euē as it doth to the  
sole: wherfore contēde I with so  
great studye to be wyse? And yet  
euē here perceyued I the same  
thought to be but vanite: For as  
sone is the wyse forgothen as the  
sole/sith althyng alyke by pcessē  
of tyme goth out of mynde: And  
as the iuste/ so dieth y sole. Wher  
fore it ykred me of my lyfe/ for no  
thyng vnder the sōne coude plea  
se me/ sith I perceyued it al to be  
but vanite / labour / & affliction.  
Thā did I abhorre al myn own  
loborous enforcementes vnder y  
sonne:

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. ii.

Sonne: for that I must be compelled to leue them to some man that folowe me. For who knoweth þ man to come whether he shall be wylle or a sole: And yet muste he be my heire / & rule i my labours and goodes gotten wisely vnder the sonne. And euyn all this yet was it but vanite. wherfore I de termined playnely with my selfe to cease from all study & traueyl offred me vnder the sonne: for a man / bring he his enforcementes to passe with never so greet wyldeome/ prudence/ and policy/ yet muste he be compelled at laste to leue the unto an unknowen heire that never dyd sweat for them. And this is also but vanite and carefull heuynesse. For what els getteth man with all his sore study and wery traueyle aboute all thynges

Ecclesiastes

Cap. iii.

thynges vnder the sonne/ þā pat petuall dolour/ heuynesse/ trauel and care of all his lyfe longe/ so that nyght nor daye hathe he no quyete mynde: And euyn this/ is also but vanite. Is it nat than better for man to eat and dynke & recreat his mynde amoge these carful afflictions: for this cometh of the goodness of god. who euer lyued more sumptuously & lyberally þā I: But verely whō god fauoureth/ hi wyl he gyue wisdom/ prudence/ knowlege/ & gladnes. But unto the sinner he giueth in fortune & care to gather & heape riches for him that pleaseþ god / wherfore/ euyn this also is butte vanite.

Cap. iii.

**A**ll thynges accordyng to their tyme be subiect unto muta-

Ecclesiastes. Cap. iii.

mutation: And nothing vnder þ  
sonne is þmainer. For what so e  
uer is now borne / it hath a tyme  
to dye. Nowe be thinges planted  
which at their tyme must be pluc  
ked vp agayne. Now it is slaine  
which before we studyed to hele.  
Now it is destroyed / that before  
was buylded. Now we wepe / &  
anon we laugh. Now heuy / now  
we leap for ioye. We cast awaie  
stones / which a non we gather in  
agayne to buylde with all. Now  
at men giuen to loue in wedlock  
and anon they abhore it. Nowe  
we seke / which and we lese. Now  
we kepe / which and we castaway  
Now we tere & ryppe / which be  
fore we sewed togyther. There  
is a tyme to be styl / & tyme to spe  
ke. Now we loue that we hated.  
Nowe we pclame batell agaist  
them

Ecclesiastes. Cap. iii.

them with whom we nouyshed  
peace. What pleasure may man  
haue in these so repugnant heuy  
labours. But hereof I pceyued /  
god to cast all these heuy heapes  
of affliction vpon man / to bere &  
torment hi self with al. For what  
so euer god made / he dyd it good  
ly in tyme and order / & so dyd he  
set it forth before the worlde also  
to be done / & euuen the consydera  
cion & creaciō of the worlde hath  
he engrauen in manes herte: but  
yet neither the beginyng nor en  
de of þ workes of god can no man  
enserche nor cōprise in his herte.  
Wherfore I thought nothyng  
better in this world / than a man  
to make mery & cheryshe him self  
whyle he lyueth. For to eate and  
drinke with a glad hert / amonge  
so many forowful labours / is the  
gyfte

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. vii.

gyft of god. for I know it verely that what soeuer god worketh it is fast perfyt & perpetuall/ neither may there any thinge be put to/ nor taken from his workes. which all/ god doth to declare hi self to be reuerently feared. This ges done dayly retourne agayn: and thinges that were to come be lately done. for the lord cōsyde ryng the trāsitory state of al this ges restoreth the vs agaie. Ouer this yet I saw þ scates of iuges/ in which there raigned vngodly nes/ for where iustyce shulde be ministred there dyd sit þ wilde. And here than I thought w<sup>t</sup> my self: The lord is the very true iuge both of the iust and vngodly: for euery thought/ al counsels & werkes that euer were or shalbe/ shall be brought before him to be iuged

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. viii.

iuged at their tyne. Than after a lyke maner I cōsyde red the cōffull state of man: how the lord exercyseth him in suche laborous misery/ that they appere nothing better than beestes/ for they haue both a lyke ende to dye: and a lyue they agre nat moche vnylyke/ as one dieth/ so dyeth the other: so that the chaunce of one semeth nat to be better than the tothers. & al is but vanite that chaunceth to them both/ & all at last come to one place: for as al came of dust so retourne they in to erth again. who can tell whether the spyyte of man ascedeth vpwardes: and whether the breach of beestes go dounwardes into the erth with their bodyes: wherfore me thynketh it besite for man to be iervye and glad in the myddes of thys mysc-

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. iii.  
miserable state / for no parte els  
shall he haue: & who shall bryng  
him agayn to se what shal be he  
re done after him.

Cap. iii.

**A**nd yet I tourned me a  
gayn to behold the iust  
oppresyon of men in this worlde  
& lo / I saw the teares of the op  
pressed w<sup>e</sup> wronge / no man nether  
helpig nor confortig the. For they  
tyrannous oppresours were of  
suche myght that no man myght  
resynt them: whiche thynge con  
sydered / I thought the to be hap  
pyer and better at ease / whiche  
be nowe ded / than them that yet  
lyue. Ye / I iuged that man to be  
happier than either of them both  
whiche is yet vnborne / whiche  
hath nat yet sene these manifolde  
myscheues commytted vnder the  
sonne.

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. iii.  
sonne. Thā loked I vpon the la  
borous enforcementes & vnwerry  
studyes of euery man: & I percey  
ued al togyder full of enuye & de  
cye: whiche al is but very vanc  
te & incer myself. And here / the  
folyschman abhoring al this clas  
ped his hādes together vntyll he  
was constayned for his ydernes  
to eat his owne fleshe: thinkyng  
nethles moche better to haue but  
an handfull with rest / than both  
his handes full with labourt and  
carfull calamite. Ouer this / I  
turned me & behelde yet another  
gret banite in this world: I saw  
men liuyng sole without chylde  
or kyn / & yet neuert ceased they la  
bouing & trauelig day nor night/  
no riches coulde satysfyre their in  
faciable eyes: no / they coulde ne  
uer thus thynke: Whetfore do I

**B** thus

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. iiiii.

thus wery & weake my selfe: for whom do I thus consumme my self with care: for whose pleasure & pfyte do I thus sparc myn own goodes fro myn owne mouth I s nat this very vanite & vnhappy heuy labour: It is better / it is better therfore two to lyue togider than one alone/ that yet eche may refresche the other with the frutes of theyz coniune labour: & especially / if one fal / yet y other felow helper may be redy at han de to helpe hi vp again: If two slepe togyder one shall warme & nourishe the other: for how may one alone defede hym self fro the iniurious colde: Also one alone (if any wolde hurt him) is sone ouercome: but two togyder may respyst: for a threwezethed rope is nat so sone broken. A pore yong man

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. v.

man y wylc is a prudet / is better than an old dottyshe ruler / that folyshe is and vncircuspeche. It happeneth ofte that one crepeth out of pryson to the kyngdome / where agayne a nother borne to be kyng / perisched for pouertye. And I saw a greet multitude vnder the sonne / folowyng and despedyng of a nother yong man to succede his father in the kigdom euene as great a nombre as euer folowed his father / some before and some after: & yet was the father never so houzouse vnto the as shall this his sonne be: to desyre therfor a nother kyng / what elles is it/ than very vanyte:

Cap. v.

Whan thou goist into y house of the lord / take good hede vnto thy fete / & I applye thy herte to

W. it. prayet

prayer and yecing of his worde: for this is moche better than the oferdaunes of folysch men/ which knowe nat what synne in so doig they comynte. Let nat thy tongue come before thy mynde / neither thy herte to hasty to speke before god: for God is in heuen/ & thou in erthe/ wherfor vse thou but few wordes for lyke as moche study & care in the day engendre many dreames / so ar many wordes the very tokē of gret folysnes. But & if thou p̄misenest any thyngē vnto god/ pay it without delay. For folcs please hi nat. If thou therfore p̄misenest hi/ pay it him: for it is better nothyng to bow / thā neuer to performe thy bowe. Be ware therfore lest thy subtile tonge wrappe thy fleshe in synne. Neither shalte thou thinke that thou

thou p̄ceist or vowest befor any aungell: for they knowe vs nat: but it is god whom thou makest angrie with praying many wordes & folyshe bowes/ whiche shal distroye all suche workes of their owne inuencion. Where are many dreames/ there is moche bante & no lesse wordis. But thou therfore se that thou seruest & cleue to god. And if thou seyst the poore afflicted/ oppressed with wronge & both iugement & equite subuerted & violently plucked out of the erthe/ yet meruell thou nat gretly at this boldnes. For this oppresour/ be he neuer so alofte / yet is there one higher tha he/ obseruig and watchyng ouer him: & yet aboue them both are there their superiours to / ye / & ouer al these / yet is there the kynge of the hole lande

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. v.

lande/ euēn he/ whose tyllyng al  
feldes obey. Who so louieth mo-  
ney/ shall never haue ynough.  
And he that gapeth for rychesse/ I  
shall never haue profyt of them:  
and euēn this is vanyte also. For  
where is habouēdance of ryches/ I  
there ar many deuoueters of thei  
to eat them vppē: And what pro-  
fytē lthan hath the possessorie of  
them els/ than for a whyle to fede  
his eyes with them: Swete is  
the slepe þ crepeth ouer the trew  
labouer/ whether he eatech lytel  
or moch: but the ryche wealy/ so  
swetely to take his reste/ surfets  
shall nat suffre him. The moste  
greuouse plage/ þ I perceyued  
to be vnder the sōne/ is a man to  
posseſſe ryches into his own deth  
and vndoynge. For rychesse pe-  
rissh nat with out the great afflic-  
tion

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. v.

tyon & tormentinge of thei owne  
possessour: which good wil both  
lyppe away frō him & his chyld-  
to: & as naked as euer they came  
both out of theyr mothers wōbel  
shal they retourne & go hence/ no  
thing caraynge away of all their  
heuy labours. This( I say ) is þ  
most myſerable afflictyou/ to re-  
tourne( for al our carfull labour )  
as naked as we cam. What thā p  
ſyteth it mā thus i vain w<sup>c</sup> his so-  
cowful labours / to bete þ wide:  
All dayes of his lyfe hath he spa-  
red & lyued full miserably/ etyng  
but porely / & that w<sup>c</sup> no lesse so-  
cowe & care/ thā angre & affliction  
of body & mide. Lo/ methiketh it  
therfore best to eate & drinke & to  
be mery in the myddes of these la-  
bours/ vntyl the ende of our lyfe  
come whiche god hath apoynted.

For

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. v.

For euēn this is out porciō. And what so euer he be vnto whō the lordē hath gyue ryches & power / if he can in his labours ete & drinke with a mery hert / receyuynge it for his porcion: surely it is the very gyfte of god. For this man b̄eketh nat his brayn / neither aboue the length of his lyfe / nor the incōmodities therof / for that the lordē thus replenisheth hys herte with ioye.

Cap. vi.

**A**nd yet isthet another comedē misery vnto al mē vnder the sōne. I se god gyue a mā ryches/ glōrye/ & honout/ & what so euer he can desyre: & yet he ḡueth him nat f̄re power to vse the but rather there shall come another vnknowē & spenide the: whiche is no leſſe vanite thā greuoſe adicſ

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. vi.

affliction. If a mā had aii. C. chil dren & lyued never so longe: sparing all this whiche his goodes from him selfe / & at last wanting a place to bury in his deed body: I wolde iuge ȳ chylde borne cast forth before the tyme better at easē than he. For this mā / as he is come in / to be laughed at / so goeth he his way again vnder drenkenes / his name buried i obliuion he seeth nomore the sōne / he syn- deth no rest nother here nor ther / he knoweth vs nat / although he had lyued two thousāde ycre / yet is his mynde vnquiet. Come nat al togyther vnto one place: Eues- ty mannes labour / is to fill his mouth: but his māde w̄ll never be satisfied. And what more hath the wyse than the sole: What helpeth it the poore / that he know- weth

Ecclesiastes. Cap. vi.  
weth wysely to walke before the  
me liuyng. It is better to se that  
thyngē which thou desirest / thā  
to desyre that thou cānest nat get.  
And yet is this but vanite & mis-  
sery. what is it / þ there is nowe  
borne. It is a man / whose mis-  
try his very name declarereth. And  
yet may he nat contende with hi  
that so made hi / sith he excelleth  
him in power. For if he so shuld  
do/ vanite shulde shew her selfe  
ouercomen of her own self. what  
therfore hath man of him self but  
vanite & misery. who knoweth  
what is most expediet for man ly-  
uyng this lyfe of his vanite / whi-  
che is like a shadowe : or who ca-  
tell a man what shal follow hi un-  
der þ sonne. Cap. vii.  
**B**etter is a good name / thā  
Bright precious dyntmētes  
And

Ecclesiastes. Cap. vii.  
And better is it to dye / than to be  
borne. Better is it to go in to the  
house of murnyng / thā of feastig.  
For in that house euery man ly-  
uyng may cosyder his ende. Bet-  
ter is murnyng thā laughter / for  
by murnyng the hert is correcte.  
And therfore / the wiseman's herte  
is i the mounryng house. But co-  
ttarywysse the foles mynde is in  
the house of mirth. It is moze  
holosome to heare the rebuke of þ  
wise / thā the swete musike of the  
fole. For the dissolut laughter of  
the sole. is lyke the crablinge of  
thornes sodely set on fyre vnder  
the pot / & this is also but vanite.  
who so doth vngly / vexeth soze  
the wyle / & destroyeth the mylde  
hert. Better is þ ende of a thige /  
than the begynnyng: & better is  
the pacient & mylde spirite / than  
the

the high mynde pufte vp. Be nat to heddy & sone angry: for wrath resteth in foles bosoms. Thynke nat with thy self / saveng: howe happeneth it / that þ world; past be better than thē that nowe are: for this is no wise question. wise dome is good with rychesse & her torage / & profytable whyles thou art here: for ryches with wyses dom are a good buckeler / but the knowlege of that wysedome gyueth lyfe to hit possessor. Loke vp vnto the workes of god: and tell me who can make streight / þ he hath crooked. In a good daye be glad / but yet in the meane tymē obserue & wayte for the euyll daye: for both be created of god Iest man shulde any other fynde. I haue espyed many thiges in þ dapes of my vanyte. Here / the iust

full perissheth to þ his owne well doyng: & there / the wicked prospereth longe in his misches. Be nat therfore to iust nor to wylle / lest thou thyself perissh also. Ne ther be thou to wicked nor to forlyfhe / lest thou sodenly dyest an euyll deth. It is good for the / so to holde þ thing / that this slippe nat out of thy handes: for who so fereth god auoideþ both these perylles. Wysedome mynystreth more strengþ to the prudent / þā x. the myghtyest men of the cyte: And yet there is no mā vpon the erth / that doth good & synne nat. Welcuer nat all that me say. Gyue nat eare to euery manes talc / lest paduerte thou herest thyn own seruauit speke yl by the / for thou knowest full well þ thou thiselue often tymes also spekest yll by a noþer

Ecclesiastes. Cap. vii.  
nother. Of al these maner thinges I haue had thow wisedome good experience. And than I thought I wyll be wiser:z here wisedom wēt farre fro me. She is now gone:z what thē? Depe & derke is the profoude secrete/but who shall serche it? Than applied I my mynde to serche & fynde out wisedom & cōnyng:z to trye out the folysnes of the vngodly & the mad errours of the fonde:z I founde that sith a woman is more better thā deth it selfi who se hert is both vctte & snare:z her hādes chaynes & bādes; but who so god fauouret he shall escape her/ whan the synner shalbe tangled & taken with her. But lo/ at laste this thinge haue I founde (sayth this precher) This thinge and that I serched to fynd knowlege/

Ecclesiastes Cap. viii.  
lege/ & yet cease I nat styl to enquire/ although I fynde it nat. Amonge a thousande men I can skante fynde one profytable/ but amonge so many women/ I fide none at all. But lo/ this one thig haue I found/ that god in the beginnig made man iust & upright but he with his posteryte haue entangled the selues with moche crafte & insynpte questions. But who is so wyse an interpretoore as to expowne and assoyle these thinges? Cap. viii.  
Wisedom maketh fresshe & a witable/ & cleareth a mannes countenance: but the angry hncircumspect is odious w/out grace. watte diligently vpon ykis mouth to do his comādementes. obserue & take hede vnto thy oth made vnto hi/ for he is called god withē

withdraw nat thy self sone out of  
his sight/nether ensrch thou nat  
his ded;/nor whether he com iust  
ly vnto his kigdom, for he doth  
what it pleaseth him. The woz  
des of kinges are mighty & full of  
maiestye: & who is he þ dare say  
vnto hi/ what doest thou: who so  
obeyeth his precept shall haue no  
harme. The hert of þ wyls saith  
a dew tyme for euery thing to be  
done/ & atteperith hiselſe vnto o  
portunitie: for eucry thinge hath  
his tyme conuenient. But þ cala  
myte of me in the meane tyme is  
right grecuouse & gret/ & mansfol  
de is his misery: for what thin  
ges be past he knoweth nat: and  
what is to com vpon hi who can  
tel hi: It is nat in manes power  
neither to lyue nor dye/he ca nat  
holde i his breth/ neither is it in  
his

his power to a boyd deth/nether  
hath he fre wyll to escew or shake  
of his crosse: no / nat his owne  
vngodlynes tha may nat deliuer  
the vngodly. All these thinges I  
marked/ applyeng my mynde di  
lyently to expende all thynges  
done vnder the sone. And I per  
ceyued one man ofte haunting domi  
nion ouer another into his owne  
distructyð. Also here I sawe cer  
tayn vngodly lately buried/ whi  
che were esteemed right holy/ and  
yet of all the cyte were they clene  
forgotten: no man nat once reme  
bering that euer there were any  
suche: whiche all is but very va  
nyte. Bycause that iugement &  
payne foloweth nat a none men  
nes vngodly dedes/ therfore is þ  
synfull hert of man contynually  
more prone & redy to couple one

C

myſ

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. viii.  
myschefe to a nother. Although  
the vngodly commytte never so  
moch synne / heapinge one synne  
vpon a nother an hundred folde /  
and hath here full longe lyfe : yet  
am I sure that they shall be bles-  
sed that cleue to god / & fere his  
face : whan the vngodlye whiche  
fere nat god / shalbe punysshed /  
their lyfe vanysshing awaþ lyke  
a shadow. Ouer this / yet espied  
I another gret vanyte i the erth  
I sawe many iuste men plaged  
as the euyll / and punysshed / as  
though they commytted euē the  
dedes of the vngodly. And con-  
trary wyse. I sawe the vngodly  
prospere in all thingis / as though  
they had lyue as well as y godly  
& I sayd anone. And euē this is  
but vanyte : wherfore at laste I  
prayed a glad minde / and iuged  
nothig

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. viii  
nothig better for man in this worl-  
de / than to eke & dynke with ho-  
nest mirth in his labours / while  
he lyue / enioyeng this gladnesse  
as the gyft of god / and so vsyng  
it vnder the sonne. Furthermore  
I endeouored my selfe wysely to  
 beholde the carefull and mysera-  
ble labours vpon the erthe. And  
I sawe some / often tymes / daye  
nor nyght taking their rest. I lo-  
ked vpon the meruelous warkes  
of god : and I perceyued that of  
all the warkes of god vnder the  
sonne / no man can serche out the  
cause nor gyue any reckenyng :  
but that the more fetuent he is to  
serche / the lesse he fyndeth. Al-  
thoughe he thinke him selfe wyse  
to know it / yet shal he knowe hi-  
self at last nothing at all / neither  
to knowe nor finde. Cap. ix.

C.ii. III

**H**These reuolued with my selfe / yet I endeououred to serche further. And I founde that there be both iust & wylsemē blisg their dedes to serue them: & al ar in the hāde of god: but yet is ther no man that knoweth whom he / amōge other / other loueth or hateth: For it chaūseth a lyke / both to the wicked & good / to the pure & unpure / both to the offerer & to him that offereth nat. It happeneth to the good / as it doth to sinners / to the perjured / as to the true swerter. Which thig / that is to wytte / that all thiges indyff'rently come as well to the one / as to þ tother / is the worst of all that ar vnder the sōne. Wherfoze manes hert swelleth in malycē / & concynueth in his own fōde madnes / unto his graue. Whyle men are

ar a lyue / they thynke them selfe sure (for a dogge a lyue / is better than a lyon dead) And yet they know that they must dye: But þ dead / they know it nat / nether deserue they any more. for their memoral is buryēd / so that they be to no man any further occasion / either of loue / ēuy / or hatered / neyther haue any pte more i þ world of any thige vnder the sōne. wherfore go & eate thy bread with ioye / & drinke thy wyne with mythe: for god is well pleased with thi wōrke. Se therfore that thy clothes be euernore whyte / and thy heed never with out oyntmentes / (that is / be euer glad & ioyouse) Lede thy life iocūdely w<sup>t</sup> thy beloued wyfe / while thou art here i this bayne worlde / as longe as god wyl suffre þ: For thys is thy porcy-

**Ecclesiastes** Cap. ix.  
porcion both of thy life & labour  
whiche god hath gyuē the vnder  
the sonne. What so euer good de  
de is offred vnto thy hande/ do it  
constātly/spedely/ & boldely: for  
in thy graue/ vnto whiche thou  
art bent to descende / there is no  
thinge to do: there is neither eru  
dition / cōtinge / knowlege / nor  
wysdom. Ouer this / yet I tur  
ned me to se how all thinges we  
re done vnder the sonne. And I  
espied y a man to hasty & swyftc/  
was nothyng apte to rōne / nor  
strength helped nat in bataile: nor  
circūspecte puision for food & vi  
ning: neither yet sharpe wylinges  
to helpe to haue riches: neither  
coude cōtinge bringe a man into  
fauour: but that al this depēdeth  
of time & fortune. Al mā knoweth  
nomore his time of deth than the  
fylshe

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. ix.  
fylshe of her takynge w<sup>t</sup> the hoke  
or bīrde of her snare / so sodenly  
cometh deth vpon mā & taketh hi  
at his time. Also I cōsydered wy  
sely yet another thinge vnder the  
sonne / & me thought it no smal  
wysdom. I saw a cite/ nat very  
gret nor yet full of people/ & yet  
was there a kinge of no smal put  
saūce besegig it & castynge vp bul  
werkes & bankes against it. In  
which cite there was a certain si  
ple pore wyse man / by whose wi  
dom the lytle cite might haue bē  
defended & delyuerted frō their en  
mies: but no mā regarded him: &  
here a nō iuged I/ wiſdom to be  
better than stregh. Natwithſtā  
ding yet was this pore mannes  
wysdom neglected/ no mā in the  
cite herynge hi. Wherfore/ y woz  
des of y wise ar of moze weight/  
althoſ

**Ecclesiastes.**

**Cap. ix.**

although they be softly spoken  
than the lowde noyse of an vnwi-  
se prince. Wherfore wylsdom is  
better thā all their armour & hat-  
nes. And one ydle vnthristy man  
troubleth many good men/no no-  
ther wayes / thā the lytell lyghte  
lye marath all the swetnes of the  
preciousse oyntment. Folysshnesse  
sointyme is better thā wylsdom  
& honour. The herte of the wyse  
is in his right hande: but the fo-  
les hert is in his lyfthande. The  
fole/ do he his owne dedes never  
so folysshly hi selfe / yet thynketh  
he all other to be but foles. if any  
stronge furiousseffecte cometh o-  
uer the/ for nat hauing thy n own  
will yet be nat moued. for to suf-  
fre & sōtyme to leaue of thy n own  
wyll/ represelth & stylleth moche  
hurte and losse. **Cap. x.**

**And**

**Ecclesiastes.**

**Cap. x.**

And yet is there another miser-  
table calamyte vnder the sonne/  
that is to wyt / þ gret ouersyght  
of rulers in þmouing & settynge  
þp foles in gret honours & digni-  
te/ suffring the riche i wisedome  
to sit styll in the dust. I saw na-  
ues ryde gloriouly þp þ palfres/  
& men worthy to be þricely rulers  
go on fote lyke seruantes. He that  
dyggeth þp the pit shall him self  
fall into it. He that breketh þp þ  
old roten hedge shalbe first biten  
of the edder. Who so colleth þ sto-  
ne shalbe most wery. And he that  
cleueth wode shall katche soncest  
harme of it. The blonter the axe  
is/ þ more labour it asketh to be  
made sharpe. Thus doth wyls-  
dom folow experiance. A sedici-  
ous secrete tale beater with his  
bacbiting is as eupill as þ edder  
that sodenly stingeth er he hisse.

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. x.

The tōge of the wise hath a gret  
grace: but þ foles lippes deuouſe  
re himself. For the begynning of  
his speche is foliſhnes / & thende  
is perylous & fonde madnesſe. A  
fole maketh many wordes: & no  
man cā perceiue neither taile nor  
head of his tale. The inforſceme  
tes of feles proſper nat / bycause  
they can nat go the right way in  
to the cite. Wo be to þ lande who  
ſe kinge is but a childe / & whose  
rulers ete erly. But happy is þ  
lande whose kinge is clere & stro  
ge / & whose rulers ete nat to erly.  
& that for their bodeſy sustinance  
& nat to paumpere their lusſes.  
For thoro we ignauy and ſewch  
the bemes of þ house ſynke down  
ne: & thoro w ydle handes it ray  
neth thoro w þ house roſe. They  
preparē theyz mete unto pleasure  
and laughter / & make their wyne

Ecclesiastes

Cap. xi.

to make mery the lyuinge: unto  
whole nougtynes / money muſt  
ministre all thyng. Cōſpyre nat/  
nor thinke thou non euyl agēſt þ  
king / nor ſay no hurt agenſt the  
ryche / no / nat i thy ſecret chābre:  
for the foules of the ayre wil cary  
them the voice of thy wordes / &  
wynged meſſengers wyll utter  
thy thoughtes. Cap. xi.

Of liberall almyſ this is ſpokē

**A**ſte forth thy b̄ede vpon  
the ouerflowing waters /  
and thou ſhalt fynde it agayn in  
tyme to come. Deale it amouge  
ſeuен & eight / for thou knowest  
nat what darth & calamyte ſhall  
fall vpō the erthe. If the cloudes  
be full / they powre downe rayne  
upon the erthe. If the tree be cut  
downe / where ſo euer it falleth /  
whether it be toward þ ſouthe or  
agēſt the north / there lieth it ſtyl.

Who so curiously obserueth and wayteth vpō the wynde/ he shall never sowe: Neither shall he never reape that fereth the cloudes. As thou neither knowest þ waye of the winde. nor the iounites kniting togider the bones in the mothers wōbe: so maist thou nat set che out þ werk; of god cuert wher so diuersely wrought. Sowe thy seaderly/ neither let thy hāde cease at euēn: for thou canste nat tell whether in this tyme or that which shal take: & if what is sowne at both times take/ it is so moche the better. The light is pleasaunt/ & iocunde is it to se the sōne. Lyue a mā never so longe in conti nuall mirth: yet hath he left him this corsasye / to consyder þ his best dayes be past & the lenger he lyueth þ more labour & misery a biddeth hi/ which al is but vanitee.

**B**E mercy therfor(þōge mā) B in thy yough / and take a glad hert unto the while thou art lusty/ take thy pleasure accordig to thy minde: but yet shalte thou well know/ that for all these thinges/ god will call the unto iuge- mēt. Wrath & heuynes/ put them ferre frō thy hert/ & couaye diseases from thy body/ and yet is thy childhed & yough both but vantte. Remēbre thy maker therfore in thy yough before those heuy carefull calamitous dayes come: wher in for thy wofull age thou shalt say: These dayes please me nothyng. Remēbre thy maker( I say) eth/ sonne/ the dayes/none & starres/ be made derke/ and the swete showers past/ þ heuy cloudes be retourned/ euēn the tyme whan the kepers of þ house shal tremble & quake & the strōge shal

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. xi.

stoupe & crepc away / & myllers  
shall stande ydle / bycause there  
shalbe so fewe : and the eye wyn-  
dowes shalbe shut vp with y do-  
re of derkenes / whā the gates of  
the stretes shalbe locked vp / and  
the myllers voyce made small &  
faite / & shalbe awake at the sōge  
of the byrde / whā all the dough-  
ters of musyke be waxen delffe / &  
thou going forth shall tremble &  
stay at the high stōbelyng blockz  
in the way: whā the Almande tre  
shall florisse / & the locust laden  
with many cares enclyueth to y  
grounde / al pleasure fayling him.  
For euē hitherwards goth mā/  
perpetually there to dwell : and  
the murners shal go about i the  
stretes. Remembre (I saye) thy  
maker / before the syluer lyne be  
taken awaye / and the golden vp  
sprynges be sonke downe / & the

Ecclesiastes.

Cap. xii.

bucket of the well catche ristes /  
and the well whecles be broken:  
For dust must retourne and be re-  
solued in to erth / as it was in the  
begynning : But the spiryt shall  
tourne in to god agayne whiche  
gauē it. All thinges ar nat elles  
than vanyte (sayde the precher)  
ye / cuen very vanyte.

[This precher & autout of this  
lytell boke / excellynge nat onely  
in wyldom / but also in teching y  
people knowlege and vnderstan-  
ding of thinges : Considered &  
serched out euery thyng / & com-  
pyled many sentences. He studyed  
also diligently to fynde out pro-  
fytale and pure speche / with no  
lesse grace than cloquēce / & wrot  
the very wordē of trewthe frely.  
These wordes of y wisse beig bo-  
th speare & stunge / were gathered  
and

**Ecclesiastes.** Cap. xii.  
AND Writen by the comē maisters  
ſt culers / endyted & deluyered of  
a certayn pastour & preacher. Bew  
ware therfore( my sonne) of any  
other many wordis mo. For there  
is neither meſure nor ende i wi  
tyng bokes. And many prechets  
diuersely & to oft prechige to the  
people/ at but tedious vnto the &  
wery the. Nowe therfore let vs  
here þ brief cōclusion of all. Fere  
god & kepe his cōmandementes.  
For this belongeth al alike vnto  
euery man. For god shal cal all þ  
dedes of euery mortall man in to  
iugement/ & shal reuele & lay open  
all their secretes bothe good and  
badde. Finis.

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